

What we claim is:

1. An autoclavable and sterilent-resistant ophthalmoscopy lens system, comprising:
  - (a) a plastic contact lens; and
  - (b) at least one image forming lens element.
2. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 1, wherein said lens system is configured such that said contact lens and said at least one image forming lens element are in a spaced apart, sealed arrangement such that a sealed air space is provided between said contact lens and said at least one image forming lens element.
3. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 2, further comprising a housing, wherein said contact lens and said at least one image forming lens element are sealingly mounted to said housing.
4. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 3, wherein said housing has posterior and anterior ends, and wherein said contact lens is threadingly mounted to said housing at said posterior end of the housing.
5. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 3, wherein said at least one image forming lens is positioned at least partially within said housing, and further comprising a sealing member located between said image forming lens and the interior of said housing.
6. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 5, further comprising a threaded retaining ring configured for retaining said image forming lens at least partially within said housing.
7. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 4, further comprising a sealing member positioned between said contact lens and said housing.
8. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 7, wherein said sealing member is chosen from the group consisting of an O-ring, a gasket and a sealant composition.

9. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 5, further comprising a second sealing member positioned between said image forming lens and the interior of said housing.
10. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 2, further comprising a desiccant positioned within said housing, between said contact lens and said image forming lens element.
11. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 1, further comprising a retaining ring configured to maintain said contact lens element and said image forming lens in optical alignment with a fluid layer positioned therebetween.
12. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 11, wherein said retaining ring comprises an annular ring configured such that said retaining ring extends around the outer circumference of said image forming lens, and further wherein said retaining ring is configured to engage said contact lens element so as to maintain the contact lens element and the image forming lens in a mating, optically-aligned relationship.
13. An ophthalmoscopy lens system having at least first and second lens elements, wherein said first and second lens elements are mounted in a spaced-apart sealed arrangement such that a sealed air space is provided between said lens elements, wherein said lens system is configured such that it may be immersed in a fluid without the fluid entering said sealed air space.
14. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 13, wherein said first lens element comprises a plastic contact lens element and said second lens element comprises a glass image forming lens element.
15. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 14, further comprising a housing, wherein said contact lens and said at least one image forming lens element are sealingly mounted to said housing.
16. An ophthalmoscopy lens system, comprising:

(a) a contact lens element having a posterior lens surface with a concave shape substantially corresponding to the shape of an average cornea, and an anterior surface;

(b) an image forming lens having anterior and posterior surfaces, wherein said anterior surface has a shape corresponding to the shape of the anterior surface of said contact lens element; and

(c) a retaining ring configured to maintain said contact lens element and said image forming lens in mating relationship with one another.

17. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 16, wherein said contact lens element and said image forming lens are maintained in mating relationship with one another without an air space therebetween.

18. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 17, wherein said contact lens element and said image forming lens are maintained in mating relationship with one another with a fluid layer located therebetween.

19. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 17, wherein said retaining ring comprises an annular ring configured such that said retaining ring extends around the outer circumference of said image forming lens, and further wherein said retaining ring is configured to engage said contact lens element so as to maintain the contact lens element and the image forming lens in said mating relationship.

20. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 19, wherein said retaining ring includes a groove extending about the interior circumference of said retaining ring, and further wherein said contact lens element includes a plurality of mounting tabs configured to be positioned within said groove for maintaining the contact lens element and the image forming lens in said mating relationship.

21. The ophthalmoscopy lens system of claim 16, wherein said anterior surface of said contact lens element is concave, and said image forming lens is biconvex.